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Aruba Birdlife Conservation visits Governor



Recently, Aruba Birdlife Conservation visited the Governor of Aruba, Mr. Fredis Refunjol. The Governor was informed of the role the foundation intends to play for preservation and conservation of Aruba's nature in general and more specifically for the wild birds in and around Aruba.

The foundation has consistently been receiving signals from the Aruban community that the numbers of birds on the island are rapidly decreasing.

The main causes of this phenomena are the strong increase in construction projects during the past years, which leads to an increased fragmentation of the birds' habitat and secondly, the presence of the invasive boa constrictor.

The foundation also voiced its serious concerns about Aruba's arrears in ratification

and implementation of international nature treaties.

Unfortunately, at the local level insufficient attention is given to nature. Aruba's nature protection legislation, for instance, is not being implemented.

The foundation intends to make efforts to attaining enforcement of this legislation to prevent further structural damage to Aruba's nature.

During the visit, Greg Peterson, chairman of Aruba Birdlife Conservation, presented the Governor with three bird photos on canvas, intended to decorate the meeting room of the Governor. The chairman has been sharing his bird pictures with the Governor for a number of years and knows that the Shoco (Burrowing Owl), the Patrishi (Crested Bobwhite) and the Kinikini (American Kestrel)

are among the Governor's favorites.

Mr. Peterson requested the Governor's special attention for the Shoco. This year alone four traditional breeding grounds of Aruba's burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*, a local subspecies, were completely destroyed. One of the photos presented to the Governor of the Shoco is a picture of an owl whose breeding ground has recently been destroyed.

The Governor is known for his love for Aruba's nature and informed Aruba Birdlife Conservation that they could count on his support.

On the picture: The chairman of Aruba Birdlife Conservation, Mr. Greg Peterson, presents the Governor of Aruba, Mr. Fredis Refunjol, with one of the three bird photographs on canvas. On this one, Aruba's burrowing owl in all its glory.